

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KATHMA 03991 271235Z

43

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9581

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, NP , US

SUBJECT: NEPAL WELCOMES ATHERTON STATEMENT ON U.S. NEPAL RELATIONS

1. LEADING NEPALI PAPERS, INCLUDING GORKAPATHRA AND RISING NEPAL, GAVE PROMINENT COVERAGE TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON'S STATEMENT BEFORE HAMILTON SUB-COMMITTEE THAT U.S. SUPPORTS "INDEPENDENT NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT" OF NEPAL. BOTH PAPERS CARRIED STORY FRONT PAGE, CENTER UNDER BIG HEADLINES AND OTHER PAPERS HAVE EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUED U.S. SUPPORT.

2. ALTHOUGH EDITORIAL OPINION NOT YET AVAILABLE, SEVERAL HMG OFFICIALS HAVE EXPRESSED PRIVATE PLEASURE AT STATEMENT. CHIRAN THAPA, FOR EXAMPLE, TOLD DCM THAT HE HAD BROUGHT STATEMENT TO ATTENTION OF THE KING.

3. COMMENT: PRESS HAS GONE ALL OUT TO PORTRAY STATEMENT AS IMPORTANT U.S. POLICY AFFIRMATION OF INDEPENDENT NEPAL, WITH EMPHASIS ON "INDEPENDENT." AT TIME WHEN ITS RELATIONS WITH INDIA REMAIN SOMEWHAT STRAINED OVER SIKKIM ISSUE, HMG IS OBVIOUSLY LOOKING FOR SUPPORT.

CARGO

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